

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 788
 Ways and Means

(Delegate Olszewski, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Campaign Finance - Contributions - Disclosure

This bill specifies that a campaign finance entity must report on its campaign finance reports, for each contribution it receives: (1) the amount of each contribution and (2) the name and address of each contributor. A campaign finance entity, however, may report a maximum cumulative amount of \$25,000 in contributions in an election cycle on its campaign finance reports without providing the amount of each contribution and the name and address of each contributor.

The bill takes effect January 1, 2011.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$5,000 to modify State Board of Elections (SBE) campaign finance software. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	5,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$5,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: For each election in which a campaign finance entity participates, it generally must file campaign finance reports at various times prior to and after the primary and general elections. The reports must contain information required by SBE with respect to all contributions received and all expenditures made by or on behalf of the campaign finance entity during a reporting period. Annual reports generally must also be filed on the third Wednesday in January.

Under SBE regulations, a campaign finance report generally must include, among other things, the amount of money or fair market value of each contribution and the name and address of the contributor. Certain smaller contributions are allowed to be reported in aggregate without identifying the individual amount and contributor of the contribution on the campaign finance report. Contributions from different contributors of under \$51, for example, may be aggregated and reported as a lump sum on a campaign finance report. Purchases of tickets for a campaign event may also be aggregated if the cost of the tickets is less than \$51 and the cumulative amount per person is less than \$251. Information on the amounts and contributors of the aggregated contributions, in those cases, must still, however, be entered into the account book required to be kept by the treasurer of a campaign finance entity. The regulations do not specify a limit on the number or aggregate dollar amount of those smaller contributions that may be reported as a lump sum.

An “election cycle” is defined under the Election Law Article as the period beginning on January 1 following a gubernatorial election and continuing until the December 31 four years later.

State Fiscal Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$5,000 to modify SBE campaign finance software to allow SBE to track compliance of campaign finance entities with the limit on contributions allowed to be reported within an election cycle without identifying the individual contribution amounts and contributors. This estimate is based on a vendor estimate provided to SBE.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 21, 2010
mpc/mwc Revised - House Third Reader - April 6, 2010

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